DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 268 021 SO 016 978

AUTHOR Goldstein, Sidney; Goldstein, Alice
TITLE Population Mobility in the People's Republic of China. Papers of the East-West Population Institute, No. 95.
INSTITUTION Hawaii Univ., Honolulu. East-West Center.
SPONS AGENCY Hewlett Foundation, Inc., Garden City, N.Y.; National Academy of Sciences - National Research Council, Washington, D.C. Committee on Scholarly Communication with the People's Republic of China.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-86638-069-8
PUB DATE Oct 85
NOTE 56p.; Funding also provided by the American Express Foundation.
AVAILABLE FROM East-West Population Institute, East-West Center, 1777 East-West Road, Honolulu, HI 96848 ($3.00).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Community Size; Human Geography; *Migration; Migration Patterns; Overpopulation; *Population Distribution; Population Trends; *Public Policy; Quality of Life; Residential Patterns; Rural Areas; *Rural to Urban Migration; Urbanization; *Urban Planning
IDENTIFIERS *China

ABSTRACT

In attempts to forestall problems inherent in too-rapid urbanization, China has instituted a migration policy designed to strictly control changes in permanent residence from rural areas or small urban places to larger cities and to encourage the development of small cities and towns. The policy is enforced through the household registration system, whereby each person has an official place of residence and must obtain official permission to change locations. Within these controls, considerable migration does occur, much of it for job-related reasons or for education. Such temporary migration, which has increased greatly, is sanctioned because it is seen as providing benefits without concurrently imposing burdens on the cities. Temporary movement (1) absorbs a considerable portion of the surplus rural areas; (2) generates income to fuel a rising standard of living in rural areas; (3) meets demands for service workers and other needs associated with improving the quality of life in cities; and most importantly, (4) provides linkages between rural and urban places. Coupled with a realization on restrictions governing permanent migration from villages to towns, temporary movement may serve as a first step in the development of small, rural oriented urban centers that are intended to provide employment opportunities and some urban amenities not otherwise available in rural areas. It remains to be seen whether such towns or the temporary contacts that peasants have with the cities will satisfy the rising consumer demands and aspirations for a better quality of life, or whether the listed exposure to urban life styles will instead increase peasants' desire to live in cities. (LH)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sandra E. Ward

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

PAPERS OF THE EAST-WEST POPULATION INSTITUTE, published about eight times a year, facilitate early dissemination of research findings and state-of-the-art essays on the demography of Asia, the Pacific, and the United States. Annual subscription rate, $12.

NOTE TO CONTRIBUTORS: The Population Institute considers unsolicited as well as commissioned manuscripts for the Paper Series. Appropriate topics are population estimation and analysis, causes and consequences of demographic behavior, urbanization and population distribution, and population policies and programs. All manuscripts are reviewed. In selecting manuscripts for publication, the Institute considers quality of scholarship and usefulness to public officials and other professionals in the field of population; it also seeks contributions reflecting diverse cultural and disciplinary perspectives on population. The series can accommodate articles not necessarily suited for journals because of unusual length or treatment of subject. All copy must be typed double-spaced. For additional information on manuscript preparation, write to the Senior Editor, East-West Population Institute.

OTHER SERIAL PUBLICATIONS OF THE EAST-WEST POPULATION INSTITUTE:

Working Papers are circulated for comment and to inform interested colleagues about work in progress at the East-West Population Institute. They are intended to complement evidence of completed work as reflected in Papers of the East-West Population Institute and the Reprint Series. $1 per copy.

Reprint Series brings selected articles originating from Institute research but published elsewhere to the attention of population specialists who might not otherwise see them. Single copies available upon request.

Asian and Pacific Census Forum is a quarterly periodical reporting on census, vital registration, and population survey activities in Asia and the Pacific. The *Forum* contains technical articles on a range of topics related to demographic measurement, and reviews of new publications in the field. Issued in August, November, February, and May. Annual subscription rate, $5.

Serial publications except Working Papers are available without charge to libraries serving population specialists and to professionals and scholars in the field of population. Requests describing the nature of the research or program and the intended use of the publications should be addressed to the Publications Office of the Institute.

East-West Population Institute
East-West Center
1777 East-West Road
Honolulu, Hawaii 96848

Director *Lee-Jay Cho*
Senior Editor *Sandra E. Ward*
Production Assistant *Lois M. Bender*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Population mobility in the People's Republic of China

Sidney Goldstein
and Alice Goldstein

Number 95 • October 1985

PAPERS OF THE EAST-WEST POPULATION INSTITUTE

4

SIDNEY GOLDSTEIN is George Hazard Crooker University Professor, Professor of Sociology, and Director of the Population Studies and Training Center at Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island. ALICE GOLDSTEIN is Senior Researcher at the Population Studies and Training Center, Brown University.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Goldstein, Sidney, 1927–
Population mobility in the People's Republic of China.

(Papers of the East-West Population Institute ; no. 95 (Oct. 1985))
Bibliography: p.
1. Migration, Internal–China. 2. Migration, Internal–Government policy–China. 3. Rural-urban migration–China. 4. Urbanization–China.
I. Goldstein, Alice. II. Title. III. Series: Papers of the East-West Population Institute ; no. 95.
HB2114.A3G65 1985 304.8'0951 85-27445
ISBN 0-86638-069-8

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments v

Abstract *1*

Urbanization levels and patterns *4*

Policies regulating population mobility *9*

Levels and forms of population mobility *15*

The free markets: a case study of temporary mobility *30*

Conclusions *38*

References *44*

TABLES

1 Distribution of Chinese cities and city populations by size class, 1982 *7*

2 Components of natural increase in Chengdu, the inner city, suburban districts, and counties, 1982 *19*

3 Migration in Chengdu, the inner city, suburban districts, and counties, 1982 *20*

4 Reasons for migration: Weifang City, 1977–82 *23*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Much of the research reported in this paper was done in China during March–May 1983 under an Award for Advanced Study and Research from the Committee on Scholarly Communication with the People's Republic of China (CSC-PRC), U.S. National Academy of Sciences. The analysis is based primarily on discussions and interviews with officials, policymakers, and scholars and on observations during visits to urban and rural locations. Published sources, including the 1982 Census, are documented where used. We are grateful to the CSC-PRC, as well as to the Hewlett Foundation and the American Express Foundation, for funding and to the Population Research Center of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, which acted as our sponsor in China, for logistic support. The paper benefited greatly from critical readings of an earlier draft by Judith Banister and an unknown reviewer.

ABSTRACT Permanent migration has long been recognized as an important mechanism that allows populations to adjust to changing economic conditions. Increasingly, temporary movement—including circulation—has come to be seen as forming another important component in the development process. China today provides a good opportunity for exploring how the two forms of mobility may complement each other and, in so doing, help to control the growth of urban places.

Despite its urban population of 200 million, China has a low level of urbanization (20 percent in 1982); but the 800 million persons in rural areas form a vast reservoir for rural-to-urban migration and for urban growth. Institution of the responsibility system in rural areas has made this situation potentially more acute by fostering a reallocation of labor, leaving many peasants without work.

In attempts to forestall problems inherent in too rapid urbanization, China has instituted a migration policy designed to strictly control changes in permanent residence from rural areas or small urban places to larger cities and to encourage the development of small cities and towns. The policy is enforced through the household registration system, whereby each person has an official place of residence and must obtain official permission to change locations. Household registration is tied to housing, jobs, and grain rations. Within these controls, considerable migration does occur, much of it for job-related reasons or for education. Counterstreams often negate much of the in-migration, especially in big cities; but in some cities, particularly medium-sized ones, migration is an important component of population growth.

As a combined result of the surplus labor associated with the responsibility system and of the opportunities in urban places created by rising urban living standards, temporary mobility has increased greatly. Many peasants engage in temporary construction work in cities. Others live for various periods in cities in connection with work in commune-run enterprises, such as shops and restaurants. Still others, on their own initiative, come to cities to work as housekeepers or to provide a variety of other services. Most visible are those peasants who come temporarily to cities to sell agricultural products or handicrafts in free markets.

Such circulation may involve days, months, or even years away from their place of official registration. Temporary mobility is sanctioned because it is seen as providing benefits without concurrently imposing burdens on the cities. It absorbs a considerable portion of the surplus rural labor; it generates income to fuel a rising standard of living in rural areas; and it meets demands for service workers and other needs associated with improving the quality of life in cities. Most importantly, it provides linkages between rural and urban places. Coupled with a relaxation on restrictions

governing permanent migration from villages to towns, temporary movement may serve as a first step in the development of small, rural-oriented urban centers that are intended to provide employment opportunities and some urban amenities not otherwise available in rural areas. Whether such towns or temporary contacts that peasants have with cities will satisfy the rising consumer demands and aspirations for a better quality of life, or whether the limited exposure to urban life styles will instead increase peasant desires to live in cities remains an open question.

The importance of migration in the complex process by which populations adjust to demographic pressures and by which labor markets achieve equilibrium has been long recognized and extensively studied (Goldstein and Goldstein 1981; Findley 1977, 1982). Researchers and policymakers are increasingly coming to recognize the importance and pervasiveness, both historically and currently, of short-term, temporary movement—circulation—as one response in the wide variety of adjustments that populations make to changing conditions (Pryor 1979; Goldstein 1978; Zelinsky 1971). As yet, however, no consistent definition of circulation has emerged, nor have research instruments been sufficiently developed to collect the appropriate data with which to document the process (Chapman and Prothero 1982). Both the possibilities of household labor reallocation and employment opportunities have been identified as factors determining the extent of population stability and the choice of circulation versus more permanent migration if movement is the chosen response.

How, then, do circulation and migration complement each other in the complex process of modernization and national development? What role does each play in the changing labor force needs of urban and rural places? Research in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Melanesia suggests that short-term movement has played an important role in the development process there, not only from the point of view of the individual or the household, but also from a community and national perspective (Chapman and Prothero 1982). Circulation helps to adjust labor supply and demand regionally or even nationally without the social dislocation that large-scale permanent migration may entail and without placing the added strains on cities that the influx of large numbers of migrants would create. It may also allow for the provision of services through the informal sector that are in short supply

otherwise. Concurrently, the flow of funds and ideas that circulation engenders may become a critical component of rural modernization.

Since the mid-1970s, many countries have identified migration and spatial distribution as a severe problem (United Nations 1982:table 49). The concerns with the problems of big cities and with rural-to-urban migration suggest that temporary movement, together with rural development, may provide governments with the basis for alternative distribution policies. Circulation may help to avoid or at least to reduce some of the undesirable effects of permanent migration on the mover and on the origin and destination. We know little about these relations, largely because of the limited research done on temporary movement. As a result, planners and policymakers have been slow to recognize the role circulation may have in the national development process, especially in the redistribution of the labor force.

In this respect, the situation in China may be of particular interest because of that nation's centrally planned economy and explicitly stated and carefully controlled migration policy. Chinese planners have recognized the value of temporary mobility as an alternative to permanent migration and provided for it to some extent in the formal planning process. They have also recognized the need to develop alternative nonagricultural job opportunities in rural areas and small towns in order to absorb surplus rural labor without rapid urban growth, especially of big cities.

The concerted efforts of the Chinese government to control population growth through its one-child family policy have understandably received worldwide attention. Less well known outside China is the considerable attention that Chinese government officials at all levels have given to problems related to the rural-urban distribution of China's population, to the rates of urban growth, and to the relations between employment opportunities and rural and urban development. These concerns have led to the emergence of a clearly articulated policy regarding population movement and the distribution of population between rural and urban places and among urban places of different size.

China's efforts to control population distribution and to achieve orderly urban growth, like its efforts to control fertility, are of critical significance for the future development and modernization of the nation. Moreover, those efforts merit continuing monitoring and evalua-

tion for the lessons they may provide for other developing countries. To the extent that many developing countries have placed even greater importance on problems of population distribution than on those of population growth (United Nations 1980), China's experiences will be of interest for the insights they may provide on how to avoid many negative consequences of too rapid urban growth while realizing the benefits of urbanization for economic development.

After a brief review of the urbanization situation in China, this paper first focuses on the nation's migration policies and the mechanism whereby migration is controlled (the household registration system) and then assesses how the new economic policies affect population movement, especially temporary movement, using the free markets as a case in point. The analysis is based largely on discussions and interviews with officials, policymakers, and scholars and on personal observations in various urban and rural locations during 1983 and 1984. It is augmented by data from the 1982 Census of China and by other published materials.

URBANIZATION LEVELS AND PATTERNS

Of the 1.002 billion people enumerated in China's third census in 1982, just over 206 million were living in its 236 cities and 2,664 other urban places (State Statistical Bureau 1983). With only one of every five persons living in urban places, China has a low level of urbanization. But because of the very large population involved, China has more people living in its urban places than constitute the national populations of all but three other countries in the world (India, the Soviet Union, and the United States). The Chinese situation is particularly intriguing because concurrently almost 800 million persons still live in rural areas and are engaged largely in agricultural activities. Therefore, as the Chinese recognize, their efforts to modernize the country must sooner or later involve the absorption of several hundred million more rural persons into nonagricultural activities and possibly into urban places.

As in other countries, considerable motivation exists among the rural population to move into cities. Differences in quality of life remain great between urban and rural places, despite efforts to reduce them. Higher incomes, better housing, sanitation facilities, educational opportunities, more varied entertainment, and greater availability of consumer goods all provide convincing stimuli for a shift

from village to city. In China, at least until the mid-1980s, another factor has been the difference in ownership systems that characterize urban and rural places. In cities most job opportunities have existed in State-owned enterprises, whereas in rural areas collective ownership by communes has been the norm. The State has attempted to provide jobs to most able-bodied urban residents. Such employment has been particularly attractive because it has carried job security, stable and higher income, free or highly subsidized medical care, retirement pensions, housing subsidies, and other fringe benefits for the workers and their families. Such lifelong security—the iron rice bowl—has been a powerful attraction for peasants whose annual incomes have depended on the vagaries of weather and on decisions made by the collective leadership about income distribution; for them, old-age security, other than support from children, was far from institutionalized (Davis-Friedmann 1983:18–19).

Although some of these factors are changing through the economic liberalization in China associated with the establishment of the responsibility system and new policies governing urban enterprises (both of which allow greater freedom in organizing production and especially a high degree of self-management), the attraction of urban places for peasants is likely to remain strong. Because of the rapidity with which change is occurring in the nation and because of the vast size of the rural population, China faces in exacerbated form many of the serious problems associated with urban growth and rural development that confront other developing countries. Even a shift of 10% of the population from rural to urban areas would involve 80 million persons and lead to about a 40% increase in the urban population. On the other hand, the Chinese have already given considerable attention to the problems of population growth and population distribution, and over the course of several decades they have experimented with efforts to control urban growth—especially the growth of big cities—and to absorb surplus labor in rural areas and smaller urban places (see, e.g., Yeh and Xu 1984). There is of course another difference between China and most developing countries; the political situation in China is such that once a given policy is adopted, it can be implemented rapidly and thoroughly.

Urban structure

China's urban places at the time of the 1982 Census included 236 cities, defined as places containing at least 100,000 persons or, if having smaller populations, as the locus of the provincial leadership organs. In addition, in 1982, 2,664 towns were classified as urban because they contained 3,000 to 99,999 persons of whom at least 70% were engaged in nonagricultural activities or because they had populations of between 2,500 and 3,000 of whom at least 85% were nonagricultural (Li 1983).

Perhaps most striking about China's urban structure is the large number of cities with populations of one million or more. In 1982 the nation had thirty-eight such metropolises, comprising 16.1% of all cities in the nation (Table 1); by comparison, the United States in 1980 had only six such cities among a total of 170 cities with populations of 100,000 or more. Of the Chinese metropolises, three—Shanghai, Beijing, and Tianjin—dominated the urban hierarchy. Another 20% of China's cities contained 500,000 to one million residents. The greatest proportion of Chinese cities, however, was in the medium-size category: over one-third of the cities had between 200,000 and 500,000 residents. Small places constituted 28% of the nation's cities.

The distribution of cities by size class does not fully reveal how the urban population is concentrated. In 1982 China's city population was heavily concentrated in the metropolises (Goldstein 1985). Whereas cities of one million or more constituted only 16% of all cities, they accounted for just over 50% of all of China's population living in cities; and almost half of those people lived in cities of 2.5 million persons or more. In contrast, medium-sized cities, while accounting for just over one-half of the total number of cities in China, encompassed 42% of the population living in China's cities. An even greater discrepancy characterizes the smaller cities, which, although accounting for 28% of all cities, contained only 6% of the country's city population. The heavy concentration of China's city population in its big cities and the problems such locations have in providing adequate facilities for their residents help to explain why government policy invokes strict control on the further growth of big cities while encouraging the growth of small cities and towns.

Restricting the assessment of urban distribution to cities omits the population living in towns, which is part of the urban hierarchy. The 2,664 places classified as towns at the time of the 1982 Census

TABLE 1. Distribution of Chinese cities and city populations by size class, 1982

Size class	Cities		City populations (in millions)	
	Number	% distribution	Number	% distribution
5.0 million +	3	1.3	17.0	11.7
2.5–4.99 million	5	2.1	15.6	10.7
1.0–2.49 million	30	12.7	42.6	29.3
500,000–999,999	47	19.9	33.5	23.1
200,000–499,999	85	36.0	28.0	19.3
100,000–199,999	48	20.3	7.3	5.0
< 100,000	18	7.6	1.4	0.9
Total China	236	100.0	145.3	100.0

SOURCE: State Statistical Bureau (1983, table 11).

accounted for over 90% of all urban places in China and for almost 30% of the population living in urban places. Although the published census statistics do not include data on the size of towns, such information is provided in a report by Ding (1984), who has described the urban-rural distribution of China's population using 1982 Census results. The data show considerable variation in the size of places designated as towns. Of the 2,664 towns, 26 had more than 100,000 residents and an additional 231 contained 50,000 to 100,000 residents. Such places thus are similar in size to the 66 small cities with populations of fewer than 200,000. On the other hand, more than 90% of China's towns had fewer than 50,000 residents and 58% were reported as having fewer than 20,000. If China should succeed in its efforts to develop a significant number of new towns as centers of urban growth and to increase the populations living in existing towns so that those places were able to absorb a substantial proportion of the agricultural surplus labor, the predominance of those smaller places in the urban hierarchy, judged both by their numbers and by the percentage of the urban population living in them, should increase significantly in the years ahead.

Policies for urbanization

The strategy for China's urban development grows out of the Chinese policymakers' belief that the too rapid growth of big cities has given

rise to many problems affecting housing, employment, and infrastructure. Such a view tends to minimize the failure of earlier government policies and programs to cope adequately with meeting consumer needs, controlling land use, providing energy and infrastructure, developing transportation facilities to supply cities, and increasing urban employment options. Regardless of cause, policymakers maintain that the number of big cities and the size of their populations need correction even while the needs of the nation's 800 million rural masses must be met. Urbanization, they therefore argue, must be harmonious with the development of industry and agriculture. This view requires, in turn, that city development be tied to agricultural production and that heavy industry serve light industry or agriculture. The need to develop all three sectors concurrently lies behind the basic urban policies of (1) strictly limiting the size of big cities (locations with 500,000 or more residents), (2) properly developing medium-sized cities (those with populations of 200,000 to 499,999), and (3) encouraging the growth of small cities (those with populations of fewer than 200,000) and county towns. The government is also encouraging the development of small market and commune centers, which are not classified as urban places, with the eventual goal of having these places form the nucleus of towns and small cities.

Big and medium-sized cities are seen as the locations of heavy and light industry; small cities and towns are viewed as potential locations for handicraft and workshop activities, with labor supplied largely from the rural surplus. Such places, it is argued, require less State investment while serving as catalysts for transforming rural into urban populations. What is perhaps most interesting about the emphasis on development of small places as the proper course of urbanization is the magnitude of the transformation that it would involve. Although planners recognize that any one town can absorb only a limited number of people, they point out that the large number of such places allows the aggregate effect to be great. For example, if each of the nation's 2,100 county seats increased its population to 50,000 persons, 39 million persons would be added to the more than 61 million current residents of those towns. And if each of the 54,000 commune seats increased to an average of only 5,000 persons, some 270 million would be resident in these centers (Ye 1982:11).

POLICIES REGULATING POPULATION MOBILITY

Paralleling China's urban policy and closely tied to it is its policy on migration.[1] The government position states that migration must fit the needs of the planned economy and any movement that is allowed, especially to urban places, must be compatible with economic development (Yeh and Xu 1984). Since urban growth is to be carefully controlled, migration to urban places must be carefully regulated. Specific principles developed to meet these goals are: (1) Rural-to-urban population movement must be strictly controlled. This principle applies especially to movement to China's three municipalities of Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin. (2) Movement from towns to cities, from small to big cities, and from rural places to suburbs must be properly limited. (3) Movement between places of similar size does not need control. (4) Movement from large to medium or from medium to small urban places, or from urban to rural places should be encouraged. Although these overall principles define permissible migration flows, actual regulation of population movement is more problematic and uneven than policy would dictate. Before turning to such an evaluation, however, we focus attention on the major mechanism used in China for regulating population mobility, the household registration system.

China's household registration system

The household registration system both defines and attempts to control permanent population movement. Each individual in China has an official place of residence, the record of which is maintained at the brigade level in rural areas and at the neighborhood level in urban places by the Public Security Bureau. To effect a permanent change in residence, one must be granted permission by the appropriate authorities in the place of origin or destination, or both. Movement within a given location is unrestricted.

The organization and operation of China's registration system is exemplified by that in Weifang, a medium-sized city in Shandong Province, which is characterized primarily by light industry, including textiles and carpet manufacture. As described by Weifang city officials, the governing philosophy is that the registration system should be

1. Unless specifically noted as being drawn from published sources, the information in this section is based on material gathered from personal communication with policymakers, city planners, other officials, and social science researchers.

systematic, convenient for the masses, and easy to manage. In urban places, every household has a household registration book. In rural areas, one person in the brigade or village holds the individual cards of all the brigade or village members. Single workers or cadres (administrators and officials at all levels) who live in factories and union facilities use a collective household register. The household register includes records of births, deaths, in- and out-migration, and changes in such characteristics as marital status, occupation, and education.

Explicit policies have been established managing various segments of the register. A household register is created when a new household is established or moves into the community. Otherwise, individual names (of newborn infants or in-migrants) are added to existing household registers; deaths and out-migrants are deleted through use of special forms. The household register book contains a card for each individual. A copy of the individual card is also kept in the Public Security Bureau. If a person moves, he or she takes his or her form along, but the police keep theirs and note changes on it. If an individual has two households of residence, only the one most often used is designated as the official place for the household register.

Out-migrants must report to the police before leaving and obtain a permit to move; the move is then entered in the household register. For intraurban moves, the police at origin must be shown the permit obtained from the police at destination; a revision is then made in the registration at origin and the household register is shifted to the destination. A rural-to-urban mover must show at the police station of origin a permit from urban place of destination to obtain the household register card, which is taken along to formalize the move. New workers and students being assigned work can obtain their household registration forms upon showing their work unit (*danwei*) permits. Recruits to the army need only show evidence of enlistment. The enlistment is noted in the household record, but the record is not given to the individual since the army does not use the household registration system. If an individual is arrested, the unit making the arrest notifies the local security police, who enter the information in their register, and the individual household card is returned to the police station. Individuals who go abroad for study or work must also report to the police and return their register cards.

In-migrating individuals must report within ten days of arrival at their place of destination, show their permit, and request a new

household register form. Demobilized soldiers and transferred army cadres must have their documentation from officials of at least the county level. Overseas Chinese and students returning from abroad may show their passports. Released criminals must show a permit of the court or of the public security unit. Homeless children need a permit from the Civil Affairs Unit.

In the medium-sized city of Weifang (Shandong Province), as in other communities throughout China, corrections were made in the household registers from August through October 1981, in preparation for the 1982 Census (Zhou 1984). Members of household register correction groups in every neighborhood and commune went to every household to insure that the detailed information in the household book corresponded to the household registration card. Government officials had estimated that, before the rectification of the household registers, 2–3% of the nation's residents lived elsewhere than the location in which they were registered; after rectification, only 1% were reported at different locations as indicated by the 1982 Census. Rectification included changing registration to the de facto place of residence if legally possible under existing policies, but de facto residence in itself was not adequate justification for a transfer of register. Thus, although persons away from their de jure residence for more than one year were enumerated in the census at the de facto place of residence, legal residence continued to be at place of registration. The Weifang official reporting this believed that local officials at both destination and origin had all the information they needed to insure correct registration and census enumeration because, as he put it, "Even if you live in a place illegally, the Neighborhood Committee will know."

The entire review process in Weifang, like that nationally, showed the registration system to be generally correct, but some problems did become evident. As a result of chaotic conditions during the Cultural Revolution, the registration system was not strictly enforced, so that errors in coverage and accuracy were introduced. Rapid population growth and especially urban growth also created problems. As a result of these situations, some individuals had no registration at all. In some instances, names of deceased persons continued to be included in the register. Most commonly, specific information on the registration cards, such as education completed or occupation, was not brought up to date.

A visit to a neighborhood in Weifang City provided an opportunity to examine the operation of the household register system at the local level. Here, the security police station (each neighborhood has one police station) is responsible for maintaining the neighborhood records. Individual households keep their own household registration books. A page is included for each person in the household. The back of the page includes space for noting date of in-migration or out-migration, as well as dates of moves within the city and the places involved in such moves. The first two pages of the books are for the household as a whole, and several pages in the back of each book are for temporary residents.

Obtaining urban registrations

Interviews with registry officials revealed that two basic principles are intended to govern the administration of the registration system: (1) the control of urban population growth in order to insure the orderly economic development of the nation by keeping population distribution in balance with labor needs and available resources, including grain adequacy; and (2) the allowance of some migration based on individual preference and humanitarian considerations, if the authorities consider the request reasonable. The two principles are not seen as incompatible. Authorities responsible for issuing household registrations ideally try to respond favorably to reasonable requests, taking human considerations into account as well as the legal prescriptions. Although the criteria employed may vary from one area to another, those established in Weifang are illustrative of how the register regulations are implemented and are similar to criteria reported in other cities:

1. Persons may obtain urban registration if they are nonagricultural workers or cadres assigned to work in the city. Workers may simply be transferees from factories in other cities. Such transfers may occur if a new factory needs workers with special skills or experience in operating certain machines. For example, when the petrochemical industry in Lanzhou was first developed, workers were transferred there from other petrochemical plants in the Shanghai area to form a nucleus of skilled labor for the new plant. Other workers may be newly recruited from the area in which a factory is being built or expanded. In such cases, preference is most likely given to middle

school graduates or young people already involved in State-run enterprises, such as State farms.

If their families already have urban registration—that is, if the transferees are moving from one urban place to another of similar size—the families may move at the same time. If the families of the transferees hold rural registration, they must remain in the place of origin, except in two circumstances. A child's household registration is the same as the mother's; therefore, if the mother is transferred to an urban place, her child's registration will also be transferred. If the family member remaining in the rural area is disabled or unable to participate in the rural economy and has no one in the village who can provide care, that individual may join the family member in the city upon receiving approval.

2. University graduates automatically receive urban household registration and are usually assigned by the State to work in urban places.

3. Persons who have worked in other cities and are retired and who have family members living in Weifang may join their families.

4. Workers and cadres who have been assigned jobs in mountain or border areas for a specified time or who have jobs that require considerable moving about may move to Weifang once their assignments are completed if they already have relatives living in the city. Such relatives may be grandparents or siblings as well as spouse, parents, or children.

5. Demobilized soldiers may return to Weifang if that is where they originally joined the army. Similarly, army cadres transferred to civilian work are eligible for urban registration in Weifang.

6. Criminals may return to Weifang upon completing their sentences if it is their city of origin.

7. Others, such as persons who have gone abroad to study and who have family members living in Weifang, may obtain registration in the city. Many special cases exist.

The regulations also determine which government office or bureau may grant permission to transfer the household registry. The permits are then checked by the Public Security Bureaus in the rural brigade or urban neighborhood of both origin and destination to determine if the official criteria sanctioning the moves are indeed being met.

Responsibility for issuing permits to transfer household registration

rests with a large number of work units and government bureaus. For example, persons who wish to move from rural to urban areas, from other counties to Weifang City or from rural places to Weifang's suburbs must apply to the police station of the Public Security Bureau at the neighborhood level. (There is one station for about every 1,000 households.) The police investigate whether the conditions specified in the application meet the official criteria, then make a recommendation to the Public Security Bureau of the city, which decides whether a permit can be granted.

If a Weifang City resident wishes to move to a medium-sized or big city, a permit must be obtained from the destination area and presented to the Public Security Bureau of Weifang City. Such movers will not be given their household registrations for the move without a permit from the specified destination.

New workers or transferred workers moving to Weifang City from other places must bring with them a permit granted by the Labor Force Bureau concerned. A variety of ministries and bureaus can issue such permissions. Cadres must obtain their permits from the Personnel Affairs Department of the Department of Central Administration; students assigned work, from the Education Department; demobilized soldiers, from the Demobilized Soldier or Army Transfer Department. In all cases, the permits must be taken to the neighborhood police station for permanent registration in the city.

In all these situations some centralized control is exercised by the city Public Security Bureau, but only for checking the validity of credentials, not for restricting the number of migrants. As a result, despite an overall policy designed to control urban growth through control of migration, the manner in which the control is exercised does not insure coordination among the varying agencies authorized to issue permits, nor does it allow for easy achievement of any specific goal. Nor are the policies interpreted in exactly the same way in every location. In Lanzhou, for example, after 1978 priority for moving into the city was given to intellectuals, teachers, and skilled workers and their families, even if they were living in rural areas. Some local Chinese officials have argued that if China's goals for control of urban growth are to be met the nation must establish a centralized authority to coordinate state policies, to administer the specific procedures for issuance of permits, and to insure that the practice is consistent with

development plans for employment, housing, education, health, and overall infrastructure.

Temporary household registration

The registration system works somewhat erratically for persons who are temporary migrants. If an individual plans to stay in an urban place for three days or more, whether for business, family visit, entertainment, or education, temporary registration is required. This may be done at hotels, with a work unit (if a person is on a short-term work assignment), or at the Industrial and Commercial Bureau office of free markets (for a peasant coming to the city to sell his or her products). A person may register directly with the neighborhood Public Security Bureau office or simply drop a temporary registration form into a box provided for the purpose in one of the neighborhoods. A temporary registration is valid for only three months and must be renewed thereafter through reapplication to the proper authorities.

Numerous officials have indicated that these requirements for temporary registration are not always rigorously enforced, nor is careful attention given to the length of time that an individual has remained at a destination, provided the individual does not become a burden on the community. (Some of the problems arising from lax enforcement are alluded to in a circular, issued in Wuhan, that required all temporary residents to report to the Public Security Bureau; see Solinger 1983.) A "temporary" stay may last a year or more. Moreover, no central reporting of temporary migrants is required such as is collected monthly for permanent moves. Data may be obtained from hotels, work units, and neighborhoods. But not all units are covered and data are seldom gathered regularly; furthermore, the statistics from the various sources are not routinely collated. As a result, statistics generally are not available on the total number of temporary migrants living in any given city during a specified period of time.

LEVELS AND FORMS OF POPULATION MOBILITY

Mobility as documented by the 1982 Census

In China an individual is officially considered a permanent migrant only if he or she has made a move involving a change in household registration. Persons living in cities who are not de jure residents of

those cities are not counted as part of the city population in any enumeration based on household registers. Nonetheless, a considerable amount of "temporary" movement to urban places exists in China, and such movement is often officially sanctioned. Since de facto residents of cities may be numerous and different in their socioeconomic and demographic characteristics from de jure residents, their omission from urban registers and statistics distorts the data on the size and composition of urban places, as well as the data on the rural populations at places of origin.

In partial recognition of this situation, China's 1982 Census identified separately and counted as residents persons who had been living in a given locality for more than one year, even though they were registered elsewhere, as well as those residing in the locality for less than one year but absent from their place of registration for more than one year. In the census each household member was classified into one of five categories of residence: (1) residing and registered in the locality (individuals who had been away from their place of registration for less than one year were included here); (2) residing in a locality for more than one year but registered elsewhere; (3) residing in a locality for less than one year but absent continuously from the place of registration for more than one year; (4) living in a locality at the time of the census but not having a settled registration status (this category includes such persons as demobilized soldiers waiting for job assignments, students, and excriminals released from penal institutions, and it may include persons missed by the registration system entirely); and (5) originally having lived in a locality but abroad at the time of the census for work or study and therefore without registration. Because of these special resident categories, the 1982 Census results are not identical to the register enumerations, despite the heavy reliance on registration to insure complete coverage in the census.

Particular attention was given in the census to the problems inherent in identifying the permanent residence of mobile individuals. For example, persons in rural communes and production brigades who went to a city or another county temporarily for work or other activities and who came back frequently were not considered as being away for more than one year and were enumerated in their place of household registration. Persons involved in activities that required geographic mobility, such as prospecting, transportation and communication, mobile sales of handicrafts and sideline products, and

construction, were also enumerated at their place of household registration to facilitate enumeration and to avoid duplication or omission.

Among the 1.002 billion persons enumerated by the census (excluding military personnel and the populations of Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao, and Tibet), preliminary tabulations indicate that 98.9% (990.7 million) were living in their place of registration (State Statistical Bureau 1982:table 2). Of the remainder, 6.4 million persons were residing in places where they had lived for more than one year without permanent registration and 4.8 million reported residence with registration still to be settled. Only a small number (210,000) were reported as residing in the particular location at which they were enumerated but absent continuously from their legal place of registration for more than one year. Still fewer (57,000) were reported as living overseas.

These figures attest to a substantial number of mobile persons, even though they constitute only a small proportion (about 1%) of the total population. Many more persons were actually mobile, but since they had changed their registration to their new place of residence, they were not separately identified. In addition, persons who had been away from their place of registration for less than one year or had been away only intermittently were not identified as migrants.

Thus, neither the census nor the registers provide complete data on population mobility. Moreover, the regulations governing changes in household registration and severely limiting migration to urban places from rural areas may result in distorted data on actual residence.

The situation in a commune outside Chengdu exemplifies the problem. One brigade reported a population of 1,769 women and 1,335 men. When asked about this imbalance, officials indicated it was due to patterns of mate selection and their effect on registry data. Many young women from the brigade marry city workers who keep their city registers; the brides must retain their rural registration, even though they may live for much of the year in the city. Since children are registered with their mothers, the overall system leads to a disproportional number of women and children registered in the brigade. The situation is so common that the villagers have a special designation for women whose husbands work in the city; they and their children are known as "workers' and cadres' families."

In other communes a similar sex imbalance may be due to selective hiring practices by urban employers. City work units may recruit from

rural areas but are likely to hire only men. In this way the government can avoid bringing families into the cities, since children's registration is tied to that of their mothers.

Permanent movement as a component of city growth

The two situations just described indicate the kinds of accommodations in permanent residence that the Chinese must make under the existing household registration system and in conformity with China's policy of controlled urban growth. Temporary movement has become a major form of mobility. Yet permanent movement, despite the restrictions imposed, continues to account for an important segment of city growth, although its level may vary by city size. The experiences of a big city (Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan Province) and a medium-sized city (Weifang in Shandong Province) illustrate the point.

Greater Chengdu

In 1982 Greater Chengdu, with its population of 4,015,529, had a natural increase of only 9.9 persons per 1,000 or 39,874, reflecting 64,665 births (16.1 per 1,000) and 24,791 deaths (6.2 per 1,000). (See Table 2.) During that year 69,147 persons moved into the city and 52,159 moved out, including university students (Table 2). The in- and out-migrants were therefore more numerous than the births and deaths; on balance, however, migration contributed only 16,988 persons to the city's growth (4.2 per 1,000 population). Natural increase was therefore more than twice as important as net migration as a factor in Greater Chengdu's growth.

The data on the components of population change in Greater Chengdu during 1982 allow separate assessment of the comparative rates of natural increase and of migration for each of the subdivisions of the city, which includes the older core or inner city, the suburban districts, and the largely rural counties that have been placed under the city's jurisdiction. Unfortunately, the data on births, deaths, and migration are not available by age, and so the comparisons are necessarily crude. Nonetheless, they suggest interesting differentials in the relative importance of natural increase and migration in the growth of the respective segments of Greater Chengdu, and through use of information made available on the volume of interprovincial migration, they also suggest the comparative importance of short- versus long-

TABLE 2. Components of natural increase in Chengdu, the inner city, suburban districts, and counties, 1982

Area	Total population	Births	Crude birth rate	Deaths	Crude death rate	Natural increase	Crude rate of natural increase[a]
Total city[b]	4,015,529	64,665	16.1	24,791	6.2	39,874	9.9
Inner city	1,239,214	18,972	15.3	6,961	5.6	12,011	9.7
Suburban districts	1,233,301	22,268	18.1	7,614	6.2	14,652	11.9
Counties	1,543,014	23,427	15.2	10,216	6.6	13,211	8.6

a. Per 1,000 population.

b. Including inner city, suburban districts, and counties under city jurisdiction.

distance movement as a factor in migration's contribution to urban growth.

The suburban districts had a slightly higher crude birth rate than the inner city and the counties (Table 2), possibly reflecting differences in age composition. The birth rates of the inner city and the counties were virtually identical, at about 15 per 1,000 persons. Most noteworthy perhaps is the similarity of the rates among the three areas. Even less variation characterized the death rates, which ranged only between 5.6 and 6.6 per 1,000. As a result, the rates of natural increase of the three residential categories largely reflected the differences in birth rates, with that of the suburbs being highest, 11.9 per 1,000, in contrast to the 9.7 and 8.6 of the inner city and counties, respectively. Again, despite the variation, natural increase in 1982 amounted to only about 1% of the population and was even less in the counties.

Greater variation was displayed by migration (Table 3). Whereas net migration for the city as a whole was only 4.2 per 1,000, equivalent to less than half the rate of natural increase, its magnitude varied from a high of 11.1 per 1,000 for the inner city to 2.5 for the suburbs and only 0.1 for the counties. As a result, migration contributed about 15% more than natural increase to the inner city's growth. By contrast, in the suburbs its contribution to growth was only one-fifth that of natural increase, and in the counties the net migration of 147 persons equaled only 1% of the natural increase. These data on net migration clearly document the extensive differentials in the importance of

TABLE 3. Migration in Chengdu, the inner city, suburban districts, and counties, 1982

Area	In-migrants			Out-migrants			Net migration			Net migration rate[a]	Net migration per 100 natural increase
	Total	From another province		Total	To another province		Total	Interprovincial			
		Number	%		Number	%		Number	%		
Total city[b]	69,147	14,972	21.7	52,159	10,839	20.8	16,988	4,133	24.3	4.2	42.6
Inner city	34,989	11,059	31.6	21,187	6,873	32.4	13,802	4,186	30.3	11.1	114.9
Suburban districts	13,544	2,750	20.3	10,505	2,310	22.0	3,039	440	14.5	2.5	20.7
Counties	20,614	1,163	5.6	20,467	1,656	8.1	147	-493	**	0.1	1.1

** Cannot be calculated.

a. Per 1,000 population.

b. Including inner city, suburban districts, and counties under city jurisdiction.

migration to population growth in the various residential segments of Greater Chengdu. Its absolute volume and importance is by far greater than that of natural increase in the inner city and practically nil in the counties.

Of course, net migration masks the opposing streams of in- and out-migration, which in Greater Chengdu far exceeded the net changes for all three residential categories. Data on the reasons for movement were not available; but if the insights gained from other locations are typical, the same basic reasons—economics and education—that accounted for some persons' in-migration also explained the out-migration of others. The net gain of some 13,800 migrants in the inner city resulted from an in-migration of almost 35,000 persons and an out-migration of 21,200. Even in the rural counties of the city, the very small net gain of 147 migrants involved a gross movement of some 41,000 persons, almost equally divided between in- and out-movers. Thus, all parts of the city experienced considerable turnover, despite the relatively small net changes of about 17,000 for the city as a whole. The involvement of some 124,000 in- and out-migrants and the possibility that they differed from each other in educational, occupational, and demographic characteristics, lend weight to the conclusion that migration must be regarded as a key variable in accounting for change on the urban scene despite the controls exercised over it.

Further evidence of the differential impact of migration on the various segments of the city is provided by data on the origin and destination of migrants. For the city as a whole approximately one out of every five in- and out-migrants moved from or to another province. This proportion varied, however, from almost one-third of the inner city migrants to one-fifth of the migrants to and from suburban districts, to less than 10% of the county in- and out-migrants. Not only did the inner city gain many more migrants on balance than did the other two segments of Chengdu, but also more of these migrants were from other provinces. Together with the large group of intraprovincial migrants, these migrants to inner cities outweighed natural increase in accounting for total growth. These data suggest that, especially for the inner city, migration constitutes a particularly important factor in demographic and socioeconomic change.

Weifang

A somewhat different picture of the importance of migration to urban growth emerges for the medium-sized city of Weifang. There the available data cover a five-year period and not just 1982. Weifang's Public Security Bureau reported that since 1979, when the government adopted a stricter policy of controlling city growth (Yeh and Xu 1984), it has been very rigid in limiting in-migration. Yet, migration accounted for an important segment of the city's population growth. At the end of 1977, the city had a population of 248,769. By the end of 1982, the population had increased to 377,952, of whom 366,207 had permanent household registration. Of this five-year increase of 129,183 persons, over half (68,313) is attributable to a boundary change resulting from annexation. The balance of the increase (60,870) can be divided between 11,745 temporary residents[2] and an addition of 49,125 persons to the household registration roster.

This increase of almost 50,000 permanent residents in turn can be subdivided into 17,486 persons added through natural increase (representing 25,525 births and 8,039 deaths) and 31,639 persons added through net in-migration. Thus, despite the careful controls on migration, population movement played a key role in the city's growth during the five-year interval, accounting for almost two-thirds of the total growth—and even more if the almost 12,000 temporary migrants are included.

Information from the Public Security Bureau of Weifang indicates the reasons for migration (Table 4). The data show that economic factors play a primary role: 10,795 individuals were given registration in Weifang in order to meet the need for more workers in factories, and another 24,143 were students assigned work in the city upon graduation and cadres transferred from other places (including family members if migration was from another city). In addition, some 3,577 workers and their families moved to the city because an entire factory shifted location. After economic factors, the next most important reason for register change was the enrollment of students in colleges and secondary schools. Slightly more than 11,000 young people obtained household registration for this reason.

2. The number of temporary residents is undoubtedly a minimum figure, since temporary registrations are not systematically collected, nor do all temporary migrants apply for temporary residence registration.

TABLE 4. Reasons for migration: Weifang City, 1977–82

Reasons	Number of persons	% distribution
Migration to Weifang		
Workers taking new jobs	10,795	17.5
Cadres assigned to new posts[a]	24,143	39.2
Factories moved	3,577	5.8
School enrollment	11,013	17.9
Policy rectification	567	0.9
Family reunion	3,478	5.7
Demobilized soldiers	2,914	4.7
Marriage[b]	3,211	5.2
Retirement	735	1.2
Others	1,157	1.9
Total in-migrants	61,590	100.0
Migration from Weifang		
Cadres and workers reassigned[a]	13,825	46.2
Students assigned to jobs or enrolling elsewhere	6,901	23.1
Enlistment in army	1,943	6.5
Rustification of youth (1978)	1,599	5.3
Family reunion	186	0.6
Marriage	1,297	4.3
Retirement	2,942	9.8
Others	1,258	4.2
Total out-migrants	29,951	100.0

a. May include family members.

b. Only if spouse was from another city. Spouses with rural registration may not obtain urban registration upon marriage.

Personal considerations do enter into the issuance of urban registration. Between 1978 and 1982, for example, 3,478 persons were allowed to move to Weifang City to rejoin their families. Of these, the vast majority were disabled persons who could no longer do agricultural work; most were elderly parents joining their adult children. A small number were parents who had been working in mountain or border areas and who rejoined their young children in the city. Marriage also accounted for about 3,000 in-migrants, since spouses were allowed to join newly wed residents in the city if the spouses came

from another urban place. The return of almost 3,000 demobilized soldiers added to the number of in-migrants, as did a small number of persons allowed to move back to Weifang to "correct" relocations during the Cultural Revolution. Finally, some retired workers and cadres shifted into Weifang from other places. Clearly, then, while economic and educational factors account for the large majority of household registrations granted in the city, noneconomic considerations also affect the decisions.

Although 61,590 migrants were given permanent registration in Weifang City during the period between 1977 and 1982, the migration stream was by no means unidirectional. Almost 30,000 persons transferred their registration elsewhere. The reasons for out-migration closely paralleled those for in-migration. Almost half (13,825) of the out-migrants were cadres, workers, and their families who moved elsewhere (presumably because of job transfers); and another 6,900 were students who were assigned work elsewhere after graduating from college or secondary school, as well as young people from Weifang City who enrolled for studies in other locations. As was true for in-migration, therefore, economic and educational reasons together accounted for the largest proportion, by far, of the out-migrants. Yet, other reasons also motivated out-migration. Almost 2,000 individuals joined the army; almost 3,000 were retired workers and cadres going elsewhere (usually to their home town) to spend their retirement years; some 1,600 had been transferred from the city in 1978 as part of the shift to the countryside (a process that stopped in 1979); and another 1,500 moved for personal reasons, such as marriage or family reunion due to illness or old age.

Because Weifang is a developing medium-sized city, the number of in-migrants during this period considerably exceeded that of out-migrants. But these data demonstrate that in China, as elsewhere, every migration stream has its counterstream and that there is a considerable turnover of population because of the combined operation of the in- and out-migration process. That the numbers involved are not greater can be attributed to China's urban growth policy as it works through the registration system.

Temporary mobility

As has been indicated, migration as defined by a change in household registration encompasses only a portion of the population mobility

characterizing China. Casual or "spontaneous" movement, involving sojourns of from a few days to several years, has been a feature of Chinese life to varying degrees since 1949 and even before (see, for example, Skinner 1976; Koshizawa 1978). It was severely curtailed with the institution of the commune system in 1958 (Griffin 1984), when few opportunities were available for rural labor mobility. Chinese planners and researchers agree, however, that despite a paucity of data, such mobility has been increasing as a result of the new agricultural policy—the responsibility system—introduced in 1979.

Instituted both in an effort to boost agricultural production and as a way of increasing peasant income (Lu 1983), the responsibility system is based on contracts involving three parties—the State, the collective, and the peasant household. At the highest level the State works out the rural production plan, assigning the types and volume of crops to be produced to various regions and allocating quotas to the collectives. Each collective, in turn, through its production brigades contracts out tracts of land to peasant households, who agree to grow given quantities of the specified crops. At the lowest level, the peasant household is required to deliver its quota to the collective, and through it, to the State. The collective retains a share of earnings from the sale of the crops for its own use. The balance of agricultural production is owned by the peasant households and is subject to an agricultural tax at the household level.

The agricultural responsibility system is implemented in a variety of ways. Overall, however, for the peasant household it allows flexibility in organizing productivity and especially a high degree of self-management. Work assignments are no longer randomly determined by arbitrary orders. Within the limits imposed by the agreement with the collective, the peasant has the right to use the land to maximum advantage, or, if he decides to pursue nonagricultural activities, to transfer the land back to the collective or to another family. At all times, the land is owned collectively, and cannot be sold to individuals or families. Large farm machines and irrigation systems also continue to be collectively owned. Public ownership of the basic means of production—land, machines, and water—is seen as insuring maintenance of the socialist system of agriculture.

Because that policy places a premium on both individual initiative and more efficient production, a large number of peasants is no longer needed in the agricultural production of basic crops, such as grains,

cotton, and oil-bearing plants. The resulting surplus labor force is partially absorbed into newly emerging rural industrial and service enterprises, the development of which the State is strongly encouraging. These nonagricultural activities are located in the villages, in county and market towns, or in commune seats; and many are a current manifestation of traditional activities (Fei 1936:18–20, reprinted in 1983). Chinese policymakers therefore see these small places as playing a key role in overall rural development (Fei 1984). They increasingly view them as potentially absorbing the vast and growing surplus rural labor pool and as alternative centers for industry and commerce. These incipient urban centers are expected to relieve the pressure on larger cities by providing urban amenities and job opportunities to ever larger numbers of rural residents who might otherwise seek them by migrating to cities. Such rural inhabitants are expected to continue to live in rural areas and sometimes even to function partly as peasants while commuting to small towns and cities to work in private, collective, or State-owned industry and commerce. (For a fuller discussion of the impact of the responsibility system on labor absorption, see Goldstein and Goldstein 1984.)

Local industry and workshops operated by communes and brigades and small private enterprises are seen as providing the operative mechanism in small town development. In some areas the government gives direct help to peasants to enable them to make the transition from agricultural to nonagricultural activities. Such help includes financial assistance, provision of raw materials, and technical training. Peasants may obtain permits to become specialists in such service activities as tailoring, carpentry, and blacksmithing, and to hire apprentices. Others may be given permission to open shops or operate small factories, or to purchase tractors, carts, or boats for transportation. Technically qualified peasants may be allowed to operate nurseries, bookshops, or clinics and are offered technical guidance to enhance the quality of their activities.

The policy emphasis on the potential value of stronger linkages between rural and small urban places as well as on the broader urban networks into which such places fit is evidenced in Document No. 1, *Circular of the Communist Party of China Central Committee*, issued early in 1984 (*People's Daily*, 20 January 1984) on the topic of rural work. It called for various measures to improve the infrastructure for commodity circulation, including better provision of storage facilities,

warehouses, transportation, and communication; it also recognized that big and medium-sized cities play a key role in rural development by providing free markets for peasants, by offering sites for wholesale markets for farm produce and sideline products, and by becoming sites where trade centers might be created.

Perhaps the strongest evidence both of the emphasis placed on development of small towns as alternatives to further growth in large cities and of their role in rural development is the circular's provision that, on an experimental basis, peasants will be allowed to settle in towns to engage in industry, business, and service trade, provided they make their own arrangements to obtain grain (presumably mainly from the communes where they have been members) and do not become dependent on State supplies. The policy implies that peasants will be allowed to build homes in the towns, although they will not have permanent urban registration there. It also implies that urban residence might be terminated if conditions should change, causing continued peasant residence to burden a town's ability to provide jobs, housing, or grain supplies. Anticipating such developments, the document urges towns to plan for short-term and long-term construction and to use land sparingly in doing so. The recent developments in rural areas and the substantial exodus by peasants out of agriculture into industrial, commercial, and service work have given impetus to the government's emphasis on the town as a place of residence and as a link in the rural-urban network (*China Daily*, 26 September 1984, 6 November 1984). That the new policies set forth in Document No. 1 are being rapidly implemented is evidenced in statistics on the number of towns in China, released a scant eight months later. According to a report in the *People's Daily* (9 September 1984), the number of towns in China had doubled to 5,698 by June of 1984 and was predicted to almost double again by the end of 1984 to about 10,000.

By creating a surplus of agricultural labor and simultaneously providing nonagricultural activities in small urban places and market towns, these new developments in rural areas are fostering an increasing level of migration. Nonetheless, the constraints on permanent change of residence inherent in the way the household registration system operates and the still limited number of economic opportunities relative to the large surplus labor force mean that mechanisms other than permanent relocation must be sought by peasants seeking to

improve their level of living, or simply even to find jobs. A considerable portion turn to activities involving sojourns in cities.

One such activity, which predates introduction of the agricultural responsibility system but may have grown because of China's overall modernization policies, is construction work. To meet the pressing demands of new construction following the lull in building created by the Cultural Revolution, peasants were recruited in rural areas to work temporarily in cities as construction workers. Such arrangements generally have been made through the initiation of contracts between work units engaged in construction and one or more communes. The commune provides a specific number of construction laborers, usually young men. They may move from city to city, as old contracts are completed and new ones initiated. In some instances work assignments in a particular city may continue over several years, as, for example, in construction activities at major universities. The number of such construction workers in China is considerable. In Guangzhou alone, it was estimated that as many as 30 to 40 thousand individuals were living in the city under such contract arrangements.

Even more may be doing so in such places as Shenzhen, Foshan, and other urban locations that are undergoing expansion. Xiao Tong, vice minister of Urban and Rural Construction and Environmental Protection, indicated that reliance upon peasants as construction workers in cities was likely to increase (*China Daily*, 10 March 1983). He reported that construction of new buildings in satellite towns and in industrial and mining areas would be undertaken mostly by rural collective teams on a contract basis.

Another way in which the individual responsibility system fosters migration involves the commune or the brigade per se. A growing number of communes and brigades are operating shops in the city for agricultural or industrial products produced by the commune. In such instances, the commune evidently receives permission from the city to operate the enterprise and is expected to pay tax to the city. Members of the commune or brigade are assigned to live and work in the city for a specified period. There is often a regular turnover in personnel who continue to be considered rural residents even while living in the city, both because of the locus of their household register and because they receive their grain ration through the commune.[3] Usually

3. In rural areas communes are responsible for providing their members with a

such migrants are not accompanied by family members. In Handan, an industrial and mining center in Hebei Province, for example, more than 10,000 peasants living in the communes surrounding the city now work in hotels, cinemas, restaurants, and other enterprises sponsored by their communes and brigades (*China Daily*, 2 March 1983).

Still another form of mobility exists that represents probably the most radical adjustment of the system to changing conditions in rural areas. Despite the absorption of large proportions of the surplus rural labor in nonagricultural activities in rural areas, in commune-operated shops in the cities, or through commune contracts with work units for temporary workers, many peasants are evidently without work. On their own, they have decided to engage in service or sales work in other rural or urban places. Some are domestics or providers of child care; some sell their services as carpenters or mattress makers, for example; still others may become itinerant merchants. While away from their official village of residence, they live with relatives, friends, employers, and sometimes even in small hotels. Most of them seem to engage in activities that allow them to obtain housing, jobs, or grain and oil rations without having to obtain a household register in their new location. A domestic, for example, can live with her employer and draw upon her employer's grain and oil rations while holding a job clearly not assigned by the government. A carpenter can do the same, taking advantage of the housing and food provided as part of the return for his services as he moves about from one assignment to another.

Such temporary service workers may constitute a considerable number of workers in any given city. Estimates for Beijing, for example, indicate that as many as 30,000 domestic workers are privately employed in the city. In Handan, as many as 10,000 peasants are estimated to be operating service enterprises such as small stands and shoe repair stands (*China Daily*, 2 March 1983). Most of those people undoubtedly are classified as temporary migrants, although their employment may last for several years. Rural laborers are also pouring into Tianjin. An estimated 100,000 are in the city as construction workers

---

grain ration; for urban residents, grain is supplied by the State through specified outlets. When a commune-based individual takes up temporary residence in a city, grain must still be obtained from the commune of origin. Only an official change of registration can change the source of grain supply. With the loosening of restrictions on grain sales through private channels, these controls are breaking down to some extent.

and vendors. Additional thousands enter as itinerant workers providing a variety of services, from puffing rice to processing cotton for quilts. About 3,000 young rural men are estimated to be doing carpentry in the municipality. Their services are institutionalized enough so that a carpentry market and labor exchange has been formed in one of the city's squares. Similarly, young women from Anhui Province, who commonly provide household help, have set up an informal labor exchange. Officials see such temporary migrants as a positive force in their nation's development because they provide needed services in urban areas and because they create opportunities for the surplus rural labor force; the successful service workers are also considered as providing a model for unemployed urban youths who in the past have looked down on service work (*China Daily*, 6 December 1984).

Perhaps the most visible form of temporary movement fostered by the individual responsibility system is the mobility engendered by the resurgence of free markets. Our attention therefore turns next to an in-depth examination of this newly vigorous form of traditional economic activity.

THE FREE MARKETS: A CASE STUDY OF TEMPORARY MOBILITY

Like so many other aspects of Chinese life and policy, free markets take on varied forms depending largely on their location and function. Similarly, the kinds of mobility associated with the markets also vary. Detailed examination of free markets can therefore serve as a useful case study of how mobility and development are interrelated and how differing forms of mobility may help individuals adjust to the changing situation in China. The following discussion focuses on those free markets that are directly related to the agricultural responsibility system as it applies to rural areas, and on those kinds of free markets that provide linkages between rural and urban areas; other types of markets, such as clothing markets in cities, are not discussed.

Rural markets were long a traditional feature of the Chinese countryside. They declined as rural production was channeled almost entirely into grain and other staple crops, and they were particularly discouraged and sometimes forbidden during the decade of the Cultural Revolution. Rural markets began to revive in 1979, a little before implementation of the responsibility system. As the new agricultural

economic policy began to encourage use of private plots and then allowed peasants to keep any crops grown on communal land above their contracted quotas, rural markets again flourished.

The scope of free markets

In Shandong Province, for example, rural markets traditionally had enabled the exchange of agricultural products. In 1955 the province's 4,500 free rural markets generated 770 million yuan in sales.[4] Once communes were established and new production priorities were promulgated, the number of markets dropped. By 1976 only about 3,000 small rural markets remained in the province. Then, with the institution of the responsibility system and encouragement of a "market bowl economy," the number of free markets in Shandong grew rapidly. By 1982 there were over 4,000, most located on main highways, at transport junctions, or in county towns; 150 were located in cities. This rapid growth indicates the importance markets are assuming for the rural economy; almost 20% of all agricultural products sold in the province in 1982 were sold in free markets. And estimates suggest that for the small cities and towns of Shandong, as much as 80% of the produce, meat, and eggs needed by the residents is provided by the free markets.

Free markets also generate a substantial portion of food sales in cities. Authorities in Jinan (Shandong Province) estimate that the 22 yuan per capita spent each year in free markets in that city constitute one-eighth of total expenditures for food. That the proportion is not higher is due in large part to the extensive development of State outlets for agricultural produce, especially grain. Officials also recognize that the number of free markets in a given city may be insufficient to meet demand. The eighteen markets operating in the inner city of Jinan in 1983 were not considered adequate; plans were being made for eventual expansion to thirty markets, so that each large residential area could have its own market. City officials believed that such an arrangement would not only be more convenient for their population, but would also relieve much of the traffic congestion now created by the existing markets. Free markets are considered so integral a part of city life that they are now being incorporated into general city planning, and their location and particular specialties may be the result of careful "social investigation."

4. One yuan equals approximately US$0.40.

Free markets generally offer a wide variety of products, ranging from staple grains to seasonal vegetables and fruits, meats, poultry, and eggs; from exotic house plants to caged birds; from small handicraft items to furniture. In Shanghai, one free market specializes in hard-to-find produce and seafood, as well as dried vegetables, especially mushrooms. Several of Beijing's markets are also specialized; one in the western district of the city is known for its plants, birds, and tropical fish. A large section of the riverbank in the city of Weifang is given over to sellers of dried legumes and grains, especially millet. Even in rural areas, specialized markets may develop on a small scale. At a small-town railroad junction in Sichuan Province, for example, twelve to fifteen peasants gather daily to sell fresh ginger. Even in such an isolated spot, where days may pass without a single sale, they can earn up to 1,000 yuan over the course of a year.

More typically, however, items on sale at free markets encompass a full range of foods and often include household items, flowers, and small handicrafts. A large market in Chengdu, for example, to which 700 to 800 vendors come daily, sells many vegetables and seasonal fruits, some dried grains, eggs, meats—including fresh and smoked rabbit—fish and eels, and flowers. The market covers several city blocks and is constantly busy during its thirteen-hour day (from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.), especially during the two hours before noon and again in late afternoon. Similarly, in one of the free markets in the northern Haidian district of Beijing, between 150 and 160 kinds of food are sold (Liu 1982) in the 800 to 900 stalls that are open daily. The market has expanded continuously since it began operations in March 1979 and now serves approximately 20,000 people daily. Although most customers of free markets buy on a retail basis, some wholesale trade also takes place, especially to restaurants and some cooperative shops.

City markets operate seven days a week, although some days, especially Saturday and Sunday, are busier than others. In rural areas, where markets are held in the county towns, smaller market centers, and sometimes in the commune centers themselves, markets are held only on specified days. These may be designated days of the week or calendar dates such as those ending in 5 or 0—that is, every fifth, tenth, etc., day of the month. Such an arrangement allows peasants to sell their wares in several locations and thereby considerably

expands their marketing potential. It also broadens the area within which they circulate.

Characteristics of vendors

Peasants who are vendors in free markets typically arrive on foot or by bicycle, in part because few peasants have access to motorized transport, in part because urban free markets (and many small-town markets as well) prohibit lorries, carts, or tractors from within their vicinity. The limits on available transportation restrict the distance from which peasants will come to sell their foods. In rural areas, peasants are likely to have access to markets within a relatively short radius; in cities, the vendors are most apt to come from the nearby suburbs. A survey in a Beijing market indicated that produce vendors bicycle in from an average distance of 40 kilometers, and that 80–90% of the produce is transported by bicycle. Nonetheless, some peasants come from a considerable distance, and even those traveling by bicycle may cover 200 kilometers (a 24-hour trip). The same Beijing market attracts vendors from at least fifteen provinces; they come to sell items rare in Beijing, such as prawns from the coast, spring vegetables from Sichuan, oranges from Guangdong, or apples from Shandong. Bird vendors come from as far away as the mountains of Inner Mongolia or the western sections of Sichuan, but since they earn very high profits, most agree that the long trips are worthwhile. Such long-distance vendors are likely to become more numerous in the future because the government has relaxed its regulations governing such interprovincial marketing. The change was already apparent in the summer of 1984, when trains were crowded with peddlers moving from Sichuan to Beijing, from Jiangsu to Inner Mongolia, from Xian to Tianjin.

The vast majority of sellers in the free markets come from nearby communes and do not remain at the market site overnight. They are most likely to sell produce and meat, and may not come to market daily but only once or twice a week. Turnover among vendors in any given market is thus quite large. Only 20–50% of produce vendors may be "regulars."

Although both men and women come to free markets to sell goods, some division of labor seems to exist between the sexes. Chengdu market managers indicated that fruit and flower vendors tend to be men, whereas vegetable vendors are more likely to be women. Our own

observations suggest further that men usually sell meats and fish, as well as birds, tropical fish, and plants, but eggs are often vended by women. Women are also much more likely to come from areas near the market site and to return home at the end of the day; longer trips and longer sojourns are more typically undertaken by men. Finally, the size and weight of the load to be transported to market may determine whether a man or woman undertakes the trip.

Peasants have several sources for obtaining the goods they sell, but all sources are fostered by the responsibility system. Some produce, poultry, and livestock is raised on the peasants' private plots; some is surplus produced in excess of the quota stipulated by the household's agricultural production contract. If a household has accumulated enough products in this way, one or several members may take it to market. In many instances, individual households may not have enough goods to warrant a trip to market, or they may not wish to undertake the journey. Such households may give their products to a second party, who will gather the production of several households and take it to market for them. The responsibility system is thereby helping to create individual entrepreneurs in rural areas to expedite the marketing of agricultural production. In Jinan, for example, 45% of the sellers were individuals selling produce they had grown, 50% were peasants selling agricultural products grown by others, and 5% sold under commune or brigade auspices.

The free markets also attract persons selling services or handicrafts, many of whom travel considerable distances. A Beijing market, for example, may have a whole section populated by tailors from Shanghai and its nearby province of Jiangsu. There is a shortage of tailors in Beijing, and because Shanghai tailors have a reputation for good styling and workmanship, they do a brisk trade. Many stay for as long as a year or more. Similarly, locksmiths and shoemakers from Jiangsu Province are a common sight in Shangdong Province or in Inner Mongolia, and they too may stay for many months. Other skilled workers, such as embroidery sellers from Zhejiang in the south, may come to far-distant markets and stay for two to three months.

For such long-term circulators, market managements may even provide overnight accommodations or arrange for them to stay in inexpensive hotels outside the center city. In a large Shanghai market, for example, dormitory-type housing is available, or peasants may rent blankets and sleep in a nearby shelter. During the peak season, and

especially in the weeks before the annual Spring Festival, market managements may arrange for extra overnight accommodations for the many peasants who travel considerable distances to provide the urban population with special seasonal delicacies and flowers. The city of Guangzhou provided eight hotels in 1983 just to house peasants coming to the city to sell flowers for the Spring Festival. Since hotels charge for room space, many peasants who cannot return home at the end of the day arrange to stay with friends or relatives in the city, or even sleep in the market stalls if the weather permits.

The free markets thus contain a heterogeneous population of vendors composed in large part of peasants from nearby communes, circulators from more distant places, and persons selling their services or goods at the market for several weeks or even months. There is apparently enough flexibility in the market management to allow such variety and also to provide the services necessary to enhance the well-being of the vendors. A Chengdu market even provides hot water and medical services to its grain and legume sellers since they often stay in the city for two to three weeks at a time.

Markets and mobility

Free markets have become an integral and vital part of the city and town life and are serving a multiplicity of functions. For example, they are helping to raise rural incomes, although just how much a share of the aggregate increased earnings they contribute is difficult to determine. Communes and brigades keep careful records of peasant earnings from agricultural and nonagricultural activities conducted under the contract system or carried on in commune-run enterprises. They apparently do not usually ask peasants to report their incomes from private plots or private handicraft products. Yet there is little doubt that income earned from such unofficial sources contributes toward peasants' ability to build new houses and to buy the transistors, clocks, TVs, and electric fans that are becoming more common in peasant homes. It is also possible that such earnings have played a role in leading some peasants to believe that they are able to afford a second child despite the fine having one would incur.

The markets also help to raise peasant incomes in another way. Since the responsibility system allows the contracting group to make its own decisions about labor allocation, manpower (and womanpower) is used more efficiently than in the past. Fewer persons are

needed to grow the basic grains and produce, thereby freeing others to engage in sideline and nonagricultural work. A household may decide to free one of its members from cultivating the collective lands to devote time to private plot cultivation and to marketing goods. The free markets thus offer nonfarm job opportunities and thereby help to absorb surplus rural workers, many of whom were underemployed before institution of the responsibility system. The net result of such full use of all available labor can be a considerable rise in average per capita income. Officials of Shandong Province estimate that as much as 20% of the surplus labor associated with the responsibility system is absorbed by free market activity.

While helping to raise the rural standard of living, free markets also meet new demands of urbanites. As urban standards of living have risen, consumer demand has developed for greater variety in foods, for better meat and produce, and for more and better services. Although prices for vegetables, fruit, poultry, and meat are generally slightly lower in State shops, the produce available in them is usually limited to whatever happens to be in peak season, and its quality is likely to be poor. By contrast, produce in free markets is likely to be carefully picked and arranged, fresh and crisp, and available in considerable variety since peasants know they can easily sell items that are not in plentiful supply locally. Urban residents are also pleased with the prompt and polite attention they receive from the vendors, which is often a sharp contrast to the attitudes they meet in the crowded State shops.

Not only do markets provide the quality and variety of foods desired by rising urban consumer demand, they also meet some of the needs of a changing population. With the increase in the number of retired persons and the concomitant decrease in the number of infants, many older people find themselves with free time that they might have previously devoted to childcare. They are turning to the pursuit of hobbies, among other activities. Raising fish and birds is particularly popular. Many markets have sections devoted to these interests, offering not only the fish and birds for sale, but also cages and other accessories. One large market in Beijing, while also selling foodstuffs, specializes in catering to these hobbies and draws customers from the entire municipality. The market decided on its particular focus after careful consideration of residents' needs. Even in some of

the smaller provincial cities, like Datong, fish and bird stalls represent an important segment of free markets.

Markets can thereby serve as centralized meeting places for various segments of the population, and in many places, urban as well as rural, they provide an important social function. Especially in the smaller cities and county towns, where cultural activities are limited and sporadic, they can help fill the need for social activities and even become a source of entertainment. They become places where friends can meet, where gossip is exchanged, where one may see exotic or unusual goods. Free markets generally do not allow the sale of freshly cooked foods because of the difficulties of maintaining standards of hygiene. Nonetheless, specialty items may be available, such as freshly baked sweet potatoes in Beijing and Jinan, skewered charcoal-roasted bits of lamb in heavily Moslem Lanzhou, and freshly baked flat breads in Chengdu. Many markets are located in streets lined with small noodle and coffee shops. Shoppers and vendors alike find added attractions in the free-market areas, and the marketing process can become an enjoyable activity. Thus, free markets provide bright touches of color—psychologically as well as physically—in towns that are often best described as grey on grey.

Finally, and perhaps most important, the free markets serve as a vehicle for modernization by forging links between rural and urban places. Peasants who go to cities to sell their produce inevitably are exposed to urban life styles, values, and attitudes. At the most basic level even the mobility between commune and town introduces an element of modernization since it broadens the scope of peasant activities and establishes contacts between persons from different types of environments. Moreover, free markets in small towns often include vendors of small household items or farm tools, who introduce new types of equipment to rural consumers. Some cities, such as Jinan, even encourage some of their unemployed young people to undertake such enterprises, thereby further strengthening the rural-urban linkages.

Furthermore, peasants who come to cities are exposed to consumer goods available in cities and may use the opportunity of being in the city to make purchases to take back to their villages. Peasants also take advantage of urban amenities, such as cinemas and public baths. They thereby contribute directly to the urban economy. Many officials believe that by having access to urban amenities on a regular basis,

peasants will be much less likely to want to move into the cities. That may be true of peasants living close to large urban places, but it is much less likely to be characteristic of persons living in more distant rural places. Exposure to urban amenities may have the effect of increasing a peasant's desire to move to a city.

CONCLUSIONS

As modernization in China proceeds, migration is likely to become an important mechanism for achieving national development goals. The challenge for policymakers will be how to channel population redistribution without overwhelming the existing large cities and placing undue burdens on their infrastructures. As the discussion of China's migration policies has indicated, current regulations governing permanent relocation are specifically designed to exercise such control through the administration of the household registration system. The policy is only partially successful since a variety of government and work units can give permission for relocation and their plans are not usually coordinated. Nonetheless, it is also clear that, without a policy of controlled migration, the volume of such movement would have been many times greater and problems of urban overcrowding infinitely exacerbated.

As new economic policies are instituted in urban areas, controlling migration may become much more difficult. Individual enterprises are being given much more latitude in decision making and much more control over management, including determining the size of the labor force. Economic planning, which may include plans to expand a given factory or other enterprise, will therefore be even more decentralized than it has been in the past, and it will become even more difficult to coordinate the movement of personnel between specific locations. This problem may be compounded because specialists and technical personnel are themselves being given much greater freedom in some locations to choose appropriate jobs where they believe their skills can be best utilized (*China Daily*, 19 December 1984).

While strongly favoring the growth of small cities and towns as alternates to bigger city growth, and while determined to control the growth of big cities, Chinese planners seem increasingly to recognize the important role that larger cities can play in China's overall development as well as in the development of smaller urban places and the rural hinterlands of the big cities. This awareness manifests itself in

several recent developments. A few big cities, such as Chongqin, Wuhan, and Shanghai, have been encouraged to help smaller places by providing technical expertise and financial support, and by sponsoring local industrial establishments. In this way it is hoped that the greater integration achieved will stimulate the growth rate of smaller urban places and encourage movement to them (*Beijing Review* 1984). In another development, fourteen coastal cities in China have been designated economic development zones, to join the four special economic zones as centers of foreign business investment. The port cities are to be allowed to practice flexible economic policies and to establish technical development districts where manufacturing, commercial, and scientific facilities will be located (*China Daily*, 14 July 1984). Chinese planners maintain that this will not lead to rural-to-urban migration; rather, these centers are expected to rely on their own labor supply or on migrants from other urban places in the same general area.

Inevitably, these policies bring into question whether China can assign new development roles to these large cities and concurrently succeed in its goal of strictly controlling the demographic growth of big cities through limiting migration to them. Success in the efforts to achieve greater development and leadership at the center, especially when this will involve expansion of manufacturing, commercial, and technological activities, is expected to lead to a demand for more workers than are available from the cities' resident populations. Especially if current restrictions on migration are relaxed in the interest of more efficiently matching skills with needs, migration to these cities may take on increased importance.

At the same time as new urban policies are being introduced, institution of economic reform in the countryside—the agricultural responsibility system—has greatly increased temporary mobility. One of the functions of the responsibility system is to provide the mechanism whereby surplus rural labor (much of it associated with more efficient agricultural production methods) can turn to nonagricultural activities while still largely maintaining a rural base. It is also hoped that the system will foster changes in nonagricultural rural production that will provide the basis for small-town development. To achieve these goals, peasants are being encouraged to develop a more diversified economy; to establish joint enterprises combining agriculture, industry, and commerce; and to establish service industries and cultural and educational

facilities in market towns and commune seats. All of these changes will mean the movement of peasants from their villages into more built-up areas even while most maintain their official registration in their villages.

Their status as rural-registered individuals may change quite rapidly during the latter half of the 1980s. The Chinese government is actively promoting the creation of new towns. A set of criteria published at the end of 1984 (*People's Daily*, 30 November 1984) allows for the redesignation of villages from township to town government if they have fewer than 20,000 inhabitants of whom more than 2,000 are engaged in nonagricultural activity, or if they have more than 20,000 inhabitants of whom 10% or more are in nonagricultural occupations. In remote or minority areas a town government can be established even if fewer than 2,000 of the population are engaged in nonagricultural work. Under these new criteria, the number of small towns was expected to rise to 10,000 by the end of 1984 (Li Huahong 1984).

What are not spelled out in the new regulations are the rules governing transfers of household registers. Since the newly created towns will contain mostly populations already resident there, only a change in status of household register—from rural to urban—will be involved. But since such towns are also expected to draw people from the surplus labor force of the surrounding rural areas, as the county towns already do, some population redistribution is envisaged. In late 1984 a document released by the State Council stipulated that peasants engaged in nonagricultural work may obtain town registration in towns at the commune level (*People's Daily*, 22 October 1984). The question then becomes whether acquisition of registration in commune towns, and perhaps later in county towns, will satisfy the people's desire for living in an urban place. It may instead only whet their appetites for living in larger, more truly urban locales where their consumer goals and aspirations for themselves and especially for their children might be more easily realized.

As has been documented, other surplus rural laborers are becoming temporary residents of cities, thereby serving as an important link between rural and urban places. They provide much needed service work and agricultural produce in cities, and their earnings help to raise rural standards of living. They are also becoming more familiar with urban amenities, however, so that as rural income and consumer demands

rise, these rural-to-urban circulators may form a strong force for permanent migration to cities. Such temporary migration may thus eventually defeat the benefits that it is seen as bestowing on both rural and urban locations.

Nonetheless, during a period of rapid economic change, temporary mobility provides a flexible adjustment mechanism for China's population. As the economic situation continues to change, creating more labor surplus in rural areas and concurrent consumer demands in both urban and rural places, population mobility will become an increasingly important way to reestablish equilibrium. Given China's restrictive policies on rural-to-urban permanent relocation, temporary moves may be the best response to current needs. As the situation develops, and as policymakers come to recognize both the desirability of population redistribution and the fact that a considerable amount of such movement has already occurred de facto, if not de jure, migration policies are likely to change. Indications of this modification of policy are already apparent, explicitly and implicitly, in the new regulations for town development. But whether policies can be implemented that allow for greater freedom of movement while controling the growth of the metropolises remains to be seen.

It is fortunate that the introduction in 1979 of the responsibility system and the urbanization policies adopted in the 1980s occurred around the time of the 1982 Census. As a result, data from the census can provide baseline information on the structure of the urban hierarchy and allow comparisons of the urban and rural populations at a point when efforts were begun to foster small-city and town growth and to absorb surplus rural labor in nonagricultural activities and in towns. Detailed tabulations from the census (not available at the time this paper was being prepared) can be used, as well, to analyze the demographic situation of the cities designated as special economic centers. Such analyses should provide some indication of what those cities' future development is likely to be if efforts to limit migration succeed. Special interest here might focus on labor force needs in relation to development plans. Use of the 1982 data will also allow later surveys and censuses to evaluate more easily the current policies' success in achieving a more uniform distribution of the population and access of rural inhabitants to a better quality of life.

Census data can thus be a valuable source for analyzing China's overall urban situation as well as for assessing the potential labor force

requirements of specific areas. The 1982 Census, however, did not include any direct question on population mobility. Information on migration is essential for a full understanding of spatial population distribution and regional inequities. Questions on migration should therefore be included in the next census, and much fuller use should be made of existing data in the population registers for assessing annual changes. Beyond this, surveys can be useful in supplementing registry data to monitor changes between censuses and in providing information on mobility—such as permanent moves, circulation, and commuting—not covered in the registry system. They can reveal how various forms of movement meet individual needs and how they fit into the larger development efforts. Such surveys are being planned by the Population Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Science in various locations in China. If carried out, they should provide important insights into the role of population mobility in China's modernization efforts.

Interest in population mobility in China stems both from concern about its effects on the quality of life in rural and urban China and from the lessons it may provide for other developing countries. Because of rapid population growth in many developing countries and interest in reducing poverty and rural-urban inequalities, growing attention is being focused on the relation between population movement and development, on the ways in which migration contributes to the exacerbation of urban problems, and on the ways in which rural development efforts affect and are affected by population movement. A particular concern is the growing rural population reservoir, which will have to be provided with adequate opportunities for livelihood in rural areas or in small towns and cities if massive rural-to-urban migration is to be avoided. Assessments of China's efforts to control urban growth by controlling population movement, of its experience with reliance on temporary movement, and of its attempts to develop small towns as alternative urban destinations should prove valuable for other developing countries despite differences in political structure.

In particular, the following questions need to be answered. To what extent does one or another form of mobility in itself or in combination relieve rural pressures? To what extent does temporary migration in the form of commuting or circular movement relieve the problems that cities such as Beijing, Chongqin, and Guangzhou would face if all temporary movers were to become permanent migrants? How much

does the interchange between urban and rural places, and particularly that of commuters and return migrants, contribute to the modernization of rural areas through the introduction of new values and behavior, and through the remittances of money and goods? How much do such remittances and the funds and goods brought back by temporary migrants contribute to the reduction of rural-urban inequities? Does the Chinese experience suggest that governments of developing countries should encourage commuting and circular movement as an alternative to permanent migration? How do development efforts such as improved transportation and educational systems and mechanization of agriculture affect the levels of migration and circulation? Can small towns be relied upon as effective alternatives to cities in meeting peasant aspirations for urban residence, or will they merely serve as stepping-stones to the bigger cities?

For China, as for other developing countries, available evidence and the research questions raised suggest that in developing a planning strategy, it is important to stress linkages rather than the differences between urban and rural populations. The available evidence (Goldstein 1978) indicates that this can be done best by recognizing that many people in developing countries are neither exclusively rural nor exclusively urban because of their bilocal or even multilocal residence patterns. The interests of these movers and of their rural and urban communities can best be served by policies that take account of the needs of the resident populations in both locations as well as those who move between them. For such policies to be successful also requires that the research agendas of China and other developing countries give increased priority to all forms of population movement.

REFERENCES

Beijing Review

1984 Economic reform: Facts behind the Shanghai Economic Zone. Vol. 27 (April 16): 16–23.

Chapman, Murray, and R. Mansell Prothero

1982 Themes on circulation in the Third World. Working Paper No. 26. Honolulu: East-West Population Institute, East-West Center.

China Daily

2 March 1983. New jobs from shrinking farmland.

10 March 1983. Peasant builders to take on bigger role.

14 July 1984.

26 September 1984. Small rural towns–reservoirs for surplus labor force.

6 November 1984. New openings for surplus farmers.

6 December 1984. Itinerant workers flocking to Tianjin.

19 December 1984. If jobs don't fit, experts may quit.

Davis-Friedmann, Deborah

1983 *Long Lives: Chinese Elderly and the Communist Revolution.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Ding Yisheng

1984 Urban rural distribution of China's population. *Renkou Yanjiu* [*Population Research*] 4 (July 29): 14–17.

Fei Xiaotong

1983 *Chinese Village Close-up.* Beijing: New World Press.

1984 Planning of population growth and distribution. *China Reconstructs* 33 (May): 24–27.

Findley, Sally E.

1977 *Planning for Internal Migration.* Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.

1982 *Migration Survey Methodologies: A Review of Design Issues.* IUSSP Papers, No. 20. Liége: International Union for the Scientific Study of Population.

Goldstein, Sidney

1978 *Circulation in the Context of Total Mobility in Southeast Asia.* Paper No. 53. Honolulu: East-West Population Institute, East-West Center.

1985 *Urbanization in China: New Insights from the 1982 Census.* Paper No. 93. Honolulu: East-West Population Institute, East-West Center.

Goldstein, Sidney, and Alice Goldstein

1981 *Surveys of Migration in Developing Countries: A Methodological Review.* Paper No. 71. Honolulu: East-West Population Institute, East-West Center.

1984 Population movement, labor force absorption, and urbanization in China. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 476 (November):90–110.

Griffin, Keith, ed.

1984 *Institutional Reform and Economic Development in the Chinese Countryside.* Amrok, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc.

Koshizawa, Akira

1978 China's urban planning: Toward development without urbanization. *Developing Economies* 16 (March):9–13.

Li Chengrui

1983 On the results of the Chinese census. *Population and Development Review* 9 (June):326–44.

Li Huahong

1984 Fresh towns to absorb migration from farms. *China Daily,* December 1.

Liu Chenlie

1982 How a free market operates. *China Reconstructs* 31 (May):42–43.

Lu Baifu

1983 The way for agriculture. *Beijing Review* 26 (January 24):14–17, 21.

People's Daily [*Renmin Ribao*]

20 January 1984. Document No. 1.

9 September 1984. China has more than 5,000 towns.

22 October 1984. New policy to allow peasants to become town residents.

30 November 1984. New criteria of town establishment.

Pryor, Robin J., ed.

1979 *Residence History Analysis.* Studies in Migration and Urbanization, No. 3. Canberra: Department of Demography, Australian National University.

Skinner, G. William

1976 Mobility strategies in late Imperial China: A regional systems analysis. In *Regional Analysis*, Vol. 2, *Social Systems*, edited by Carol A. Smith, pp. 327–64. New York: Academic Press.

Solinger, Dorothy J.

1983 Temporary residence certificate regulations in Wuhan. Research Note, University of Pittsburgh.

State Statistical Bureau

1982 *Major Figures on the Third Census of Population of China.* Beijing: China Statistical Publishing House.

1983 *Ten Percent Sampling Tabulation on the 1982 Population Census of the People's Republic of China.* Beijing: China Statistical Publishing House.

United Nations

1980 *World Population Trends and Policies, 1979 Monitoring Report*, Vol. 2, *Population Policies.* Population Studies, No. 70. New York.

United Nations, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs

1982 *World Population Trends and Policies, 1981 Monitoring Report*, Vol. 2, *Population Policies.* Population Studies, No. 79. New York.

Ye, Shuzan

1982 Urbanization and housing in China. *Asian Geographer* 1:1–11.

Yeh, Anthony Gar-On, and Xueqiang Xu

1984 Provincial variation of urbanization and urban primacy in China. *Annals of Regional Sciences* 18 (November):1–20.

Zelinsky, Wilbur

1971 The hypothesis of the mobility transition. *Geographical Review* 61 (April):219–49.

Zhou Guang-sheng

1984 On the role played by household registration materials in China's 1982 Population Census. Paper presented at International Seminar on China's 1982 Population Census, Beijing.

RECENT AVAILABLE PAPERS OF THE EAST-WEST POPULATION INSTITUTE

No.

77 An assessment of fertility and contraception in seven Philippine provinces: 1975, by Wilhelm Flieger and Imelda Pagtolun-an, November 1981, x + 154 pp.

78 The population dynamics of Nepal, by Judith Banister and Shyam Thapa, December 1981, viii + 119 pp.

79 Migration and unemployment in Hawaii, by Robert D. Retherford, January 1982, vi + 18 pp.

80 The demographic situation in India, by Mahendra K. Premi, February 1982, x + 152 pp.

60-E The changing value of children in Turkey, by Cigdem Kagitcibasi, June 1982, viii + 100 pp.

81 Labor markets, urban systems, and the urbanization process in Southeast Asian countries, by Terence G. McGee, July 1982, vi + 28 pp.

82 Ethnicity, birthplace, and achievement: the changing Hawaii mosaic, by Paul Wright and Robert W. Gardner, February 1983, vi + 41 pp.

83 Population distribution policies in Asia and the Pacific: current status and future prospects, by Roland J. Fuchs, February 1983, viii + 40 pp.

84 Circulation and interpersonal networks linking rural and urban areas: the case of Roi-et, Northeastern Thailand, by Paul Lightfoot, Theodore Fuller, and Peerasit Kamnuansilpa, March 1983, vi + 46 pp.

85 Development perspectives and population change, by Ozzie G. Simmons, April 1983, vi + 41 pp.

86 The effects of induced abortion on subsequent reproductive function and pregnancy outcome: Hawaii, by Chin Sik Chung and Patricia G. Steinhoff in collaboration with Roy G. Smith and Ming-Pi Mi, June 1983, xii + 144 pp.

60-F Influences on childbearing intentions across the fertility career: demographic and socioeconomic factors and the value of children, by Rodolfo A. Bulatao and James T. Fawcett, June 1983, x + 152 pp.

87 Population mobility and wealth transfers in Indonesia and other Third World societies, by Graeme J. Hugo, July 1983, vi + 50 pp.

88 Structural change and prospects for urbanization in Asian countries, by Gavin W. Jones, August 1983, vi + 46 pp.

89 Urban growth and local taxes in less developed countries, by Roy Bahl, Daniel Holland, and Johannes Linn, September 1983, vi + 33 pp.

90 A false fertility transition: the case of American blacks, by Paul Wright and Peter Pirie, February 1984, viii + 81 pp.

60-G The old-age economic security value of children in the Philippines and Taiwan, by Susan De Vos, March 1984, viii + 72 pp.

91 A profile of Hawaii's elderly population, by Eleanor C. Nordyke, Richard K.C. Lee, and Robert W. Gardner, August 1984, viii + 39 pp.

92 City characteristics, migration, and urban development policies in India, by Mahendra K. Premi with Judith Ann L. Tom, June 1985, viii + 127 pp.

93 Urbanization in China: new insights from the 1982 Census, by Sidney Goldstein, July 1985, vi + 73 pp.

94 Comparison of fertility trends estimated alternatively from birth histories and own children, by Robert D. Retherford and Iqbal Alam, July 1985, viii + 39 pp.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

THE EAST-WEST CENTER is a public, nonprofit educational institution with an international board of governors. Some 2,000 research fellows, graduate students, and professionals in business and government each year work with the Center's international staff in cooperative study, training, and research. They examine major issues related to population, resources and development, the environment, culture, and communication in Asia, the Pacific, and the United States. The Center was established in 1960 by the U.S. Congress, which provides principal funding. Support also comes from more than 20 Asian and Pacific governments, as well as private agencies and corporations.

Situated on 21 acres adjacent to the University of Hawaii's Manoa Campus, the Center's facilities include a 300-room office building housing research and administrative offices for an international staff of 250, three residence halls for participants, and a conference center with meeting rooms equipped to provide simultaneous translation and a complete range of audiovisual services.

THE EAST-WEST POPULATION INSTITUTE, established as a unit of the East-West Center in 1969, carries out multidisciplinary research, training, and related activities in the field of population, placing emphasis on economic, social, psychological, and environmental aspects of population problems in Asia, the Pacific, and the United States.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ISBN 0-86638-069-8 $3.00